

REMARKS

This communication is being filed in response to the final Office Action having a mailing date of April 16, 2007. No new matter is added herein.

The final Office Action indicted that claims 2-4, 12-14, 17, and 21 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. The Examiner is thanked for this indication of allowable subject matter.

Accordingly, claim 2 has been rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of its base claim 1, with claim 1 now canceled herein without prejudice.

Claim 12 has been rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of its base claim 8, with claim 8 now canceled herein without prejudice. Dependent claims 9 and 10 are amended as shown to change their dependency based upon newly independent claim 12.

Claim 13 also has been rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of its base claim 8. Dependent claim 15 has been amended as shown to change its dependency based upon newly independent claim 13.

Claim 17 has been rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of its base claim 16, with claim 16 now canceled herein without prejudice. Claim 18 is also canceled herein without prejudice.

Claim 21 has been rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of its base claim 19, with claim 19 now canceled herein without prejudice. Dependent claim 20 is amended as shown to change its dependency based upon newly independent claim 21.

Claims 5-7 are canceled herein without prejudice.

With this filing, claims 2-4, 9-15, 17, and 20-21 remain pending in the application. The rejection of certain claims as set forth in the final Office Action are rendered moot in view of the rewriting and amending of claims as set forth above.

It is respectfully submitted that this present filing can be entered, since the rewriting and amending of claims as discussed above do not raise new issues that would require further search and/or consideration. For instance, certain claims are merely being rewritten in independent form, and furthermore, all of the limitations in the presently pending claims have already been searched and considered. Moreover, the number of total pending claims and/or the

number of independent claims is not increased herein, in view of the cancellation of various claims as identified above.

It is kindly requested that the claims belonging to the same claim set be renumbered and grouped together in the to-be-issued patent.

If there are any issues, such as informalities, that still need to be addressed prior to allowance of the application, the Examiner is kindly requested to telephone the applicants' attorney (Dennis M. de Guzman) at (206) 622-4900 to discuss such issues. It is hoped that any further changes to the claims, if appropriate and if necessary, can be discussed by telephone and authorized for an Examiner's amendment in order to facilitate prosecution and expedite allowance. The Examiner's cooperation in this regard would be very much appreciated.

The Director is authorized to charge any additional fees due by way of this filing, or credit any overpayment, to our Deposit Account No. 19-1090.

All of the claims remaining in the application are believed to be allowable. Favorable consideration and a Notice of Allowance are earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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